

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the application. No new matter is believed to be added to the application by this reply.

Entry Of Amendment

Entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 is respectfully requested because it complies with a matter of form set forth in the office action. Entry is also proper because this Amendment places the application in condition for allowance or, alternately, reduces issues for appeal.

Status of the Claims

Upon entry of this Amendment, Claims 1-18 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 8 and 12 have been amended to more clearly set forth the invention without altering the scope of the claims and without presenting any new issues. Claims 13-15 find support at page 8, lines 11-15 of the specification. Claims 16-18 find support at page 9, lines 14-19 of the specification.

Claim Objections

The Examiner asserts that claims 1, 8 and 12 contain informalities. The Examiner believes that “a print engine having a plurality of trays” is misdescriptive in stating that the position that a print engine is equivalent to a print head. However, the term “print engine” has been used to mean the machine itself, i.e., the hardware. An Applicant can be his or her own lexicographer. *See MPEP 2173.05.*

Nonetheless, the independent claims have been amended to recite the trays separately from the print engine. As a result, the claims are free from any potential informalities.

Rejections Based On Hube And Moro

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hube (U.S. Patent 5,229,814). The Examiner adds the teachings of Moro (U.S. Patent 6,327,051) to the aforesaid rejection to reject claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Applicants traverse.

The Present Invention And Its Advantages

The present invention, in part, pertains to a printing system having a user interface that is capable of simplifying and speeding up the process of loading the required type of recording sheets from different trays. The present invention has many embodiments, but a typical embodiment can be found in claim 1:

1. A digital image production apparatus comprising:
 - a print engine;
 - a plurality of trays each of which is capable of accommodating different types of recording sheets;
 - a user interface; and
 - an electronic control system for controlling print processing, including control of supply of recording sheets from the trays in accordance with sheet specifications of print jobs,
 - wherein the control system has access to a memory which stores for each tray the type of recording sheets presently accommodated therein, and
 - wherein, when recording sheets of a type required for a job are not available in any of the trays, the control system:
 - indicates, through the user interface, the required type of recording sheet;
 - selects an eligible tray that can accommodate the required recording sheets;
 - invites, through the user interface, an operator to place recording sheets of the required type in the eligible tray; and
 - automatically, in response to receiving a confirmation signal which confirms that the operator has completed the requested action, presumes that the installed recording sheets are of the required type and stores information specifying the required type of recording sheet in a location of the memory associated with said eligible tray.

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Reply to Office Action of August 22, 2005

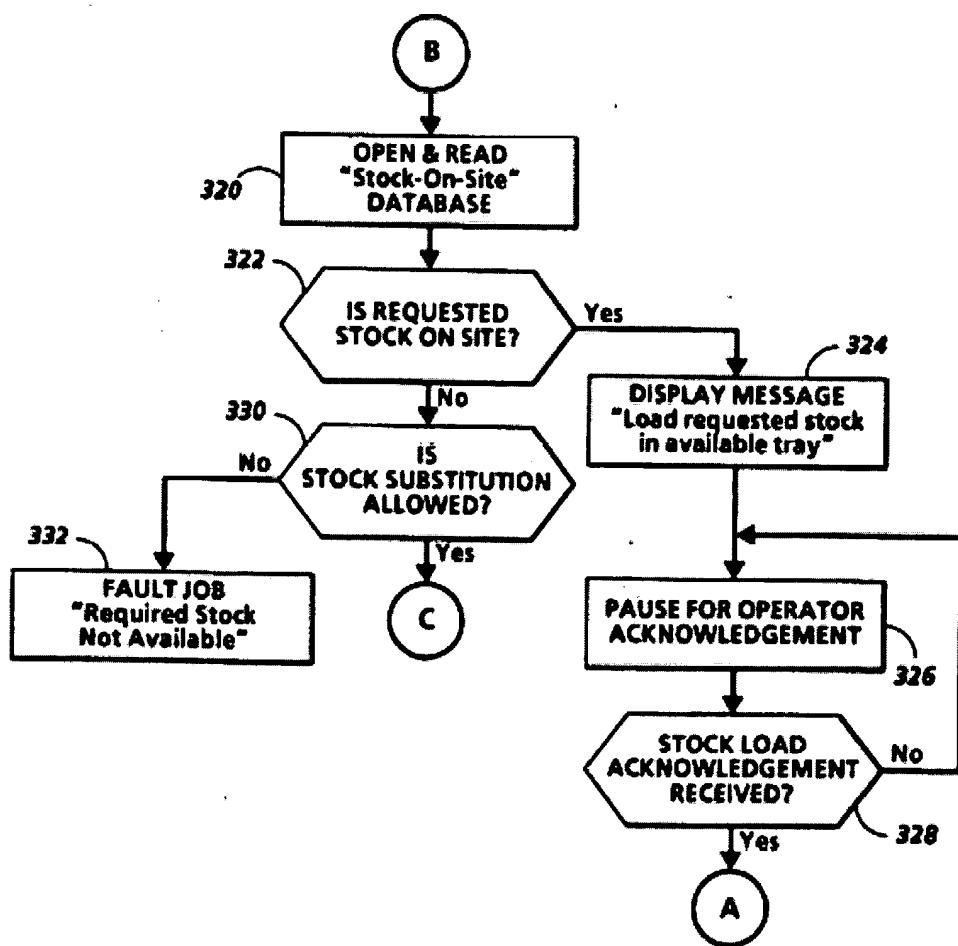
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Distinctions Of The Invention Over Hube And Moro

Distinctions of the present invention over Hube and Moreno have been placed before the Examiner in the Response filed June 28, 2005.

In making the rejections, the Examiner turns to *inter alia* Figure 7B of Hube, which is reproduced below.

FIG. 7B



At pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner takes an idiosyncratic view of the disclosure of Hube and asserts that this reference teaches:

- wherein, when recording sheets of a type for a job are not available (requested print medias are not available, fig. 7b-7e, cols. 7-8) in any of the trays, the control system: indicates, through the user interface (UI, fig. 5-6), the required type ("called for stock column" represents requested media for print job, fig. 6a) of recording sheet;
- selects an eligible tray (select different/substitute media types if requested medias are not available, fig. 6-7) that can accommodate the required recording sheets;
- invites, through the user interface, an operator to place recording sheets of the required type in the eligible tray (prompts users to load media into trays, fig. 7b); and
- automatically, in response to receiving a confirmation signal which confirms that the operator has completed the requested action (printing will be resumed and/or started when media is loaded/detected, fig. 7b, col. 9, lines 20-65), presumes that the installed recording sheets are of the required type (requested media is loaded by operators, fig. 7b, cols. 9-10) and stores information specifying the required type of recording sheet in a location of the memory (memory 56, fig. 2) associated with said eligible tray.

However, the Examiner holds on to an interpretation that is not supported by the description. He bases his opinion on steps 324, 326 and 328 in Fig. 7b. In the preceding steps (306-1 ...-N) it has already been decided that the stock requested by the current job is not loaded in any of the trays.

In that case, it is first checked (320, 322) if the requested stock is on-site. If so, the operator is directed to load the proper stock, and the process is

paused for the operator to do so. The text of Hube does not disclose exactly what happens, but only refers to Fig. 7b, steps 326 (“pause for operator acknowledgement”) and 328 (“stock load acknowledgement received?”). Then, the flow chart branches via “A” to step 306-1, where it is again checked if the requested stock matches the stock loaded in any of the trays. If so, the print process is started via steps 308, 310 and 312.

Accordingly, the operator should acknowledge that he has loaded the requested stock. The Examiner interprets this as a single “yes.” However, the relevant tray has now been loaded with different stock than it contained before, and according to the normal procedures of the Hube machine, as described at column 9, lines 21-24, the tray must in that case be re-programmed for its new contents: “During use, the operator loads the programmed stock into one of the paper trays 110, 112, 114 and enters, by means of UI 52, the characteristics of the stock, i.e., size, type, and color.”

This is also, and more clearly, described in the Moreno patent (U.S. Patent 5,081,595, from application no. 07/590,101 that Hube incorporated by reference at col. 1, lines 41-45).

Furthermore, even if the Examiner’s allegation that the machine controller presumes that the installed recording sheets are of the required type would be correct, then there would be no point in again checking the tray

content definition in step 306-i. So, if there is a check, there must have been a non-automatic change.

In contrast, the present invention fails to include that check because it is not necessary. In Fig. 3 of the present application, step S8 detects the operator confirmation, step 9 updates the memory with the new, automatically presumed tray contents, and in step 10 the print process starts up immediately.

As a result, Hube clearly fails to anticipate the present invention. The Examiner turns to Moro for teachings pertaining to user terminals to reject claim 7. However, Moro fails to address the deficiencies of Hube in anticipating or suggesting the present invention. A *prima facie* case of obviousness has thus not been made over claim 7.

These rejections are overcome and withdrawn thereof, therefore it is respectfully requested that the claims be passed to allowance.

Prior Art

The prior art cited but not utilized by the Examiner indicates the status of the conventional art that the invention supersedes. Additional remarks are accordingly not necessary.

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Information Disclosure Statement

The Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the Information Disclosure Statement filed May 4, 2001, and for making the initialed PTO-1449 form of record in the Office Action mailed March 28, 2005.

Drawings

The Examiner is respectfully requested to indicate whether the drawing figures are acceptable in the next Official Action.

Priority

The Examiner has acknowledged foreign priority in the Office Action mailed March 28, 2005.

CONCLUSION

The Examiner's objections and rejections have been overcome, rendered moot or obviated. No issues remain. The Examiner is accordingly respectfully requested to place the application in condition for allowance and to issue a Notice of Allowability.

Should there be any outstanding matters which need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact

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Robert E. Goozner, Ph.D. (Registration No. 42,593) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

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Respectfully submitted,

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